

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

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Study on Education of Blacks Finds Problems

By WILLIAM H. HONAN

A new reference book devoted to the preschool and secondary-school education of black students offers less that is encouraging than an earlier volume about higher education. Both are part of a planned three-part series.

"The news in this volume is not as good as it was in the first," said William H. Gray III, president of the United Negro College Fund, which raised \$5 million to support the publications.

"The first volume showed things like the remarkable growth in the college graduation rates of black women," he said. "This study has more negatives. Our next task is to find out why."

The 370-page book, being released today in Washington by the college fund's Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute, compiles, but does not analyze, decades of information from 40 archives. The first volume was released in March and the third, to be published this summer, will focus on the transition of black students from high school to work or to college.

Michael T. Nettles, a professor of education on leave from the University of Michigan who has devoted nearly a year to the project, said there were a number of unexpected revelations in the latest volume, which used data gathered through 1994, including:

¶ Contrary to the widespread belief that black students are a dominant presence in urban public schools, Mr. Gray said, less than one-third of black public school students attend schools in large cities.

¶ Young black children participate in preschool programs at a higher rate, or 53 percent, than white students, who represent 44 percent.

¶ Black preschoolers display abilities comparable with those of white students in verbal memory, social behavior and physical development, but fall behind in vocabulary skills.

¶ Black students are more fearful of physical harm at school than whites, and must cope with more security guards, gangs, weapons and metal detectors. And more black students in suburban schools worry about being harmed while traveling and from school.

¶ Although blacks are 12.5 percent of the population of the United States, they represent more than 16 percent of all public school students. The graduation rate of African-American students, however, is lower — 12.5 percent, in proportion with their percentage of the population.

¶ Black students represent a disproportionate 28.7 percent of students in special education schools.

The compilations were conceived by Mr. Gray, a former Congressman from Philadelphia who became the first black House member to serve as the Democratic whip.

"Congressmen, policy-makers and others can't do their jobs unless they have this raw material available to them," he said.

Sources in the book include the Department of Education, the Census Bureau and the National Science Foundation.

Corrections

An article and an entry in the News Summary yesterday about Malcolm Shabazz, the 12-year-old grandson of Malcolm X who is accused of having set the fire that critically injured the boy's grandmother, referred incorrectly to a court hearing in the case on Monday. It was a detention hearing, to determine whether the boy would remain in custody; technically, there are no arraignments in Family Court. The summary also misstated the status of the hearing. It was adjourned until

yesterday; it was not completed on Monday.

In addition, articles yesterday and on Monday misstated the date of Malcolm X's assassination. It was Feb. 21, 1965, not May 21.

An article yesterday about the survivors of the Oklahoma City bombing misstated the number of days a 5-year-old boy, Brandon Denny, spent in intensive care for his injuries. It was 71 days, not 17.

An art review on Friday about an exhibition of works by Joaquin Torres-García at the Jan Krugier Gallery in Manhattan through July 30 misstated the gallery's address. It is at 41 East 57th Street, not East 57th.

The credits with a television review yesterday about "Bill Clinton: Rock 'n' Roll President" on VH1 misstated the given name of the program's Washington producer. She is Joy Roller, not Jay.

The New York Times

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MIKE C. J.
we should get
a copy of this
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cc: EK

File: Educ - Urban Schools